

## “WITH...honor”

Scripture: Romans 13:11-14

Graphics: Stones, hands,

Big Truth: The people of the Panama UMC are called to live out their salvation with a set of characteristics that accompany the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Focus Phrase: Living out my faith with HONOR lifts others up and brings high esteem to God through me.

### 1. Introduction

- A. From Grimm’s Fairy Tales: “Once there was a little old man. His eyes blinked and his hands trembled; when he ate he clattered the silverware distressingly, missed his mouth with the spoon as often as not, and dribbled a bit of his food on the tablecloth.

Now he lived with his married son, having nowhere else to live, and his son's wife didn't like the arrangement. “I can't have this,” she said. “It interferes with my right to happiness.” So she and her husband took the old man gently but firmly by the arm and led him to the corner of the kitchen. There they set him on a stool and gave him his food in an earthenware bowl. From then on he always ate in the corner, blinking at the table with wistful eyes. One day his hands trembled rather more than usual, and the earthenware bowl fell and broke. "If you are a pig," said the daughter-in-law, "you must eat out of a trough." So they made him a little wooden trough and he got his meals in that.

These people had a four-year-old son of whom they were very fond. One evening the young man noticed his boy playing intently with some bits of wood and asked what he was doing. “I'm making a trough,” he said, smiling up for approval, “to feed you and Mamma out of when I get big.”

The man and his wife looked at each other for a while and didn't say anything. Then they cried a little. They then went to the corner and took the old man by the arm and led him back to the table. They sat him in a comfortable chair and gave him his food on a plate, and from then on nobody ever scolded when he clattered or spilled or broke things. One of Grimm's fairy tales, this anecdote has the crudity of the old, simple days. (Grimm’s Fairy Tales)

- B. Doing the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason is what our final characteristic in this series, HONOR, is all about. And Honor is still honor even IF one is doing the right thing at the right time for the right reason AFTER having done the wrong thing at ANY time for ANY reason.
- C. Today, in our final installment of our sermon series called WITH, we’ll dive into what it means to live out of faith in Jesus Christ WITH HONOR.

- D. The German Brothers Grimm, who wrote 86 fairy tales, originally named “Children's and Household Tales,” did not write these to be allegories about how to live out faith in Jesus Christ. In fact, some of the fairy tales are downright frightening if you’ve read them.
- E. This tale, however, gives us a chance to look deep into our own hearts as we prepare to read the Apostle Paul’s words to the first-century church in Rome.
- F. The point of the Grimm tale I read, from a Christian perspective, is that if I focus on what I want - on MY happiness or my way only - then I’m operating out of my own flesh nature and not from a place of humility, peace, respect, or love...or honor...not walking in the way of Jesus.
- G. This final message sums up what Paul has encouraged the church to do in Romans 12 and 13.
- H. If you’re taking notes, write this down: **Living out my faith with HONOR lifts others up and brings high esteem to God through me.**
- I. It’s about doing the next right thing, at the right time, for the right reason.
- J. Let’s Pray and then open the Word of God! **PRAY!**
- K. Romans chapter 13, starting in verse 11...you KNOW what time it is...
- L. He starts with “Besides this...” talking about all the things he’s talked about (having humility, being filled with and spreading peace, having respect for authorities, loving one another)...finally, he writes...

## 2. Scripture

### A. READ ROMANS 13:11-14

- B. If I had to sum this section up in one phrase it would be: **Be ready, church, because you know what’s coming...do the right things at the right times for the right reasons with Jesus for God and for those around you.**

### C. TIME

- i. Paul reminded the church that they were (and we are) living in a very special time. He wasn’t talking about the time on your watch, but he used the Greek word *kairos*. Kairos means a very special moment in the grand scheme of God’s timing. In this case, it’s the time AFTER Jesus walked out of his own grave, but before he comes again.
- ii. This moment is like **civil twilight**. As a hunter, civil twilight is an important concept. If you’re a morning person, you know that the time after it’s pitch dark, but before sunrise is a very special time. Things are quiet...the wind usually calms down...the world starts to come alive slowly. It’s my favorite time to be in the woods, sitting in a treestand... waiting.

- iii. One reason I like civil twilight is because I can start to see things around me. To be honest, I don't LOVE walking around the woods in the dark... never have. But, because, as a hunter you want to be where you're going BEFORE civil twilight, you need to move in the dark. There's something a little disconcerting about walking through the woods in the dark.
- iv. But when the first peak of light starts to chase away the darkness on the horizon, I usually sit in awe of the beauty of the things I see in the light.
- v. Paul said, "Church: you KNOW what time it is! You know it's after Jesus was here on earth, but before he comes back...before sunrise (that's SONrise). It's civil twilight of our world...of our faith. Jesus is coming back...so be ready." Paul said.

#### D. LIGHT vs. DARK

- i. See, Paul used this contrast between dark and light to make his point about living out their faith WITH HONOR. The old age, before Jesus, is gone. The new age, WITH Jesus, is now here.
- ii. It's time to wake up and see the light on the horizon. It's time to wake up and serve and love God and others as we get ready for the Sonrise coming.
- iii. Why? Because, Paul wrote, "...salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers..."
  - a. In one way, that's obvious, right? Chronos time (time on a clock) continues to move on. There's a moment in the future, though, when Jesus will return. Every second that passes on the clock takes the world one second closer to that moment.
  - b. But, in another way, we also know that, as we live out our faith with humility, peace, respect, love, and honor, **salvation is indeed closer, stronger, and more powerful than it ever was.** OUR salvation has a greater and greater impact in our world as we grow in faith and mission.
- iv. The night is far gone, defeated by Jesus' death...the day is near, promised by Jesus' return.

#### E. WORKS OF DARKNESS

- i. Then, Paul gets to the good stuff - into his instructions: Because the night is gone and we're living in civil twilight of God's kairos, lay aside (reject, take off, put down) the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.
- ii. Paul continued his contrast to make this point: anything that is sinful or selfish is in the category of things that happen in the dark (and he'll list some examples in the next breath). Anything that is right and true, WITH HONOR, is in the category of those thing that are done in the light.

- iii. The first century church, as small as it was, knew that certain things were sin and other things were not. It's a pretty clear narrative through out the bible, both OT and NT, that we, as God's people and followers of Jesus, should reject sin and embrace what's right. We know the difference because we read it in scripture, we feel it in our guts because of the Holy Spirit, and we have it legislated in our civil government.
- iv. Paul said that sinful things are those that are trying to be hidden under the dark of night...things that are secret, unrevealed.
  - a. Things like, Paul said, reveling and drunkenness, debauchery and licentiousness, quarreling and jealousy. Those are some 10 cent words.
  - b. The NIV translations helps us a little by saying they are things like, "orgies and drunkenness, sexual immorality and debauchery, dissension and jealousy."
  - c. These are things that harm our bodies and minds and often involve harming the bodies and minds of other people through our actions.
  - d. AND...in almost every case, these things are done in secret, in the dark, not wanting to be revealed or exposed to the world. These are clearly things with which the church in Rome was surrounded by...or engaged in. That's why Paul commanded the church to lay THOSE things aside.
  - e. And once they did...they can put on the **armor of light**. Paul gave us what that means in Ephesians 6:10-18 where he talks about the full armor of God...things like a belt of truth, a breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit. And prayer and alertness and perseverance.

#### F. PUT ON CHRIST

- i. Paul summed it up like this (my paraphrase): Instead of taking up, putting on, sticking with ANYTHING that is a work of darkness - any sin - INSTEAD, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make NO provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. None!
- ii. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement said this in his notes...I just love how the old King James Version reads here.. "Verse 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. [Wesley wrote] But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ — Herein is contained the whole of our salvation. It is a strong and beautiful expression for the most intimate union with him, and being clothed with all the graces which were in him. The apostle does not say, Put on purity and sobriety, peacefulness and benevolence; but he says all this and a thousand times more at once, in saying, Put on Christ. And make not

provision - To raise foolish desires, or, when they are raised already, to satisfy them.”

G. Honor is putting on the armor of light, that is Jesus, and living in faith. That HONOR lifts others up and brings high esteem to God through me.

### 3. Application

A. This whole series has been about of 5 rock solid, immovable characteristics of living out our faith: WITH humility. WITH peace. WITH respect. WITH love. And WITH honor. It’s what we do as followers of Jesus. And they can ALL be summed up by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, who IS humility, peace, respect, love, and honor.

B. We’ve looked at the other four, so let’s dive a little deeper in Honor.

C. Honor is defined as high respect, great esteem. It’s an adherence to what is right or a conventional standard of conduct. To live WITH HONOR then, is to live in such a way as to bring or be worthy of respect, esteem.

D. And honorable life is characterized by duty, integrity, renown and high regard from God and others. Living out my faith with HONOR lifts others up and brings high esteem to God through me.

E. Paul gives us three things to consider and do in order to live out our faith with WITH honor.

#### i. First, **Know the Time**

a. Not the time of day on this Sunday morning, but place yourself in the grand timeline of God’s history.

b. We find ourselves 2020 years or so after the birth of Jesus Christ. History pivoted on Jesus’ birth. He is the Son of God and Savior of the world, the Messiah the world was waiting for. And, now, you and I wait for Jesus to return someday.

c. Your story is part of God’s kairos time in this season of twilight, waiting for Sunrise. And that Sunrise could well be before I say my next words.

d. I pray not, because, if you can hear my voice today and you aren’t 100% certain that when you die you will be welcomed into God’s eternal kingdom, then you may have no time to consider it further.

e. There’s urgency in you coming to Jesus by faith, repenting of your works of darkness which is sin, and then following Him by giving every part of your life. You’re not here by accident today.

f. Living WITH honor starts with knowing what time it is and then responding to Jesus’ invitation to follow Him before He returns.

#### ii. Second, once your His, living WITH honor requires that you **Reject the Works of Darkness**

- a. There is no provision in any word or chapter of the bible that allows followers of Jesus to be OK with sin in any form.
  - b. Scripture is filled with grace because Jesus is all grace. But Jesus is also all truth at the same time. God sees all things in the world and in your heart. And He gives you every escape from sin.
  - c. You and I are really good, sometimes, at justifying our sin, hiding our sin, continuing in sin, in the darkness.
  - d. Honor requires that we look at ourselves with sober judgment, like Paul said in Romans 12:3. Once you find the sin in your life, it's a full expectation of the Holy Spirit that you will reject it.
  - e. Paul gave us some examples - sexual sin of any kind, which are so powerful in our lives...drunkenness - there is never a time or place where being drunk is the right thing, Christian...it only leads to destruction. Paul even lumps in things like quarreling and jealousy. Fighting with each other (even outside the church, Facebook users)...and jealousy, which is a dangerous beast that erodes trust and breeds hate.
  - f. Reject, take off, put down, and set aside ALL the works of darkness.
- F. And, praise God, **Put on the Lord Jesus Christ**
- i. In Philippians 4:8, Paul says this, "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things."
  - ii. Living out your faith WITH honor means shifting your thinking to things that will bring high esteem to God's name and the church.
  - iii. Church, you and I get to wear Jesus around so that others will see His light!
  - iv. Like armor that a soldier uses to protect and have confidence in his or her battles, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ is not only protection from the sin that so easily trips you up, but shines a light of love into the world.

#### 4. Conclusion

- A. The couple in Grimm's fairy tale learned a profound truth from a small child about how to take the honorable way. And they were willing to change, to be honorable, even though they had not been.
- B. You and I are called to be honorable, living in the light in ALL things, to be loving, to be respectful, to be peaceful, and to be humble.
- C. As we live out our faith in Jesus Christ WITH these characteristics, the world WILL know who is our Lord and Savior. Now is the time, church!
- D. Let's go from this place to live out our faith WITH Jesus... Let's PRAY!